

GRAPE VINE

Flower shop expansion

Blue Springs Flower and Gift shop will now be able to live up to its name as a recent expansion has enabled owner Dot Gould to add a gift area.

Dot, who has run the Mill Street flower shop for six years, was offered the extra space by building owner Bill Mainprize. The new space, formerly occupied by Joe's Barber Shop, will be used for a work area and refrigeration.

"I've never had room to have gifts and make the shop more interesting. It's been very frustrating waiting to do this, because the work area was so stressful," Dot said on Monday, adding plush toys could be a new feature at the shop.

"I don't think we'll be big on gifts, but it's something to add to the flowers."

Gas leak at Leathertown

Acton's volunteer firefighters were called to Leathertown Lumber late Friday afternoon after an employee driving a lift truck struck a gas heater, breaking a gas line.

Owner Betty Farr said the front of the building smelled like a barbecue, but another employee was quick to shut off the gas meter.

"There was no panic. It was too hot to panic," she said.

"In this case," explained Fire Department Captain Herb Dodds at the scene, "action was taken quickly. We've had so many of

them (gas leaks) and there's never been a problem."

Withers cancels 3-on-3

With only seven teams committed, Acton Minor Hockey coach Scott Withers on Monday cancelled the first-ever three-on-three ball hockey tournament in Acton, set for this Saturday.

He attributed the poor response to families being on holidays and a lack of promotion.

"It's a bad time of year with people on vacation," acknowledged Scott, who plans to reschedule the event at the Community Centre for the third or fourth week in August.

"By that time, people are finished holidays and baseball and lacrosse seasons are over."

Sports camp starting

Low numbers the past few years have resulted in Bob McKay cutting this year's 16th annual Acton Sports and Fitness camp, running from Aug. 21 through 25, to one week from three.

"But with the Dee Cee Sports Camp folding and the Rec. and Parks Department not running sports programs in Acton this summer, I'm swamped with 43 kids already," said an ecstatic Bob on Monday.

Only seven spots remain for the camp, which is open to 6 to 13-year-olds and operates from 8:45 am to 3:30 pm.

"We don't base the camp on one sport and the No. 1 priority is having fun," Bob, a Physical and Health Education teacher at Georgetown High, offered.

He said that the youngsters will be supervised at all times. To register, call Bob at 853-3596.



THANKS, ROBIN! At the recent United Way general meeting at McKenzie-Smith, Robin Elliott, middle, was recognized for her service as Acton campaign chair in 1993 and 1994. Director Kathleen Hayward and outgoing president John Oliver make the presentation. (Doug Harrison photo)

Why are so many surprised?

I think I'm pretty cynical when it comes to promises made by public figures. Judging from public reaction lately though, I might actually be an optimist. Here are but a few examples.

Recently, the Pope issued an Encyclical letter directed toward the upcoming women's conference in Beijing. In it, Pope John Paul II re-affirmed the critical role of women in Catholicism and condemned violence against women and misogyny. He also said that the Catholic church would not be ordaining women priests and restated the official church position against abortion.

You would have thought he cancelled Christmas. The papers were filled with outraged feminists who condemned the Pope. Why? Did they think that because they oppose his position, he would change the direction of the church? Come on — this Pope is known to be very conservative. For those who were surprised at his stand, I have some shocking news for you. Tomorrow the sun will rise in the east and set in the west. This Pope will never change his beliefs.

The Catholic church is almost 2,000 years old and is steeped in tradition. It's not going to radically change anything without years of debate. There is a serious shortage of clergy though, and this is a problem that will have to be addressed. What I think Catholics will see, in the near future, is more priests arriving from Third World countries, where vocations appear to be more plentiful.

I think the rules on celibacy will be relaxed before you see women priests. The Church has recently ordained a few married ministers who converted to Catholicism — if this strategy doesn't produce the needed clergy then who knows what options will be considered? I don't; I'm not wired into the loop in Rome and I've given up any hope of being Pope Mike the First.

The Pope is against abortion — quel surprise! This is another area where I see nothing startling. The sanctity of life is central to Catholicism and will not change. Why would anyone think that the head of a religion would reverse one of its basic tenets?

The Way I See It

With Mike O'Leary



The bottom line is that it's not an easy thing to follow the teachings of any religion. None of them point to an easy path through life.

I was amazed last February, when I worked with a man in his 60s who is Muslim. He got up a 4 am every day to cook his meal and didn't take anything, not even water, until after sunset. I remember thinking that not eating meat on Friday was no big deal compared to what his religion required.

Our priest is fond of saying that religion is not a smorgasbord where you pick and choose the doctrines you like. You believe or you don't, and you try to live your life accordingly. He also points out that there are 10 commandments — not 10 suggestions!

Many people don't agree with the Pope's firm stand on these issues, but around the world millions do. Whether you agree or not, you have to admire someone who stands by his beliefs in a storm of secular condemnation.

People seem to be amazed that the provincial Tories are keeping their promises. Photo Raedar is gone (way to go, Mikey Bay-bee!); JobsOntario is toast; the Interim Waste Authority is trash (sorry — bad pun) and so on. All promises Harris made during his campaign.

I can understand some amazement that a politician would keep his word, given the amount of codswollop we've been force-fed by politicians in the past. But the rantings of the left are getting tir-

ing. Take a valium people, these are the easy promises he's handling now.

The Tories have ended subsidies for business. Smooth move to cut off the perceived elite before moving on to broader social programs. These cuts will be vociferously opposed by the "Coalition Against (fill in your favourite group)." That's when the rubber will hit the road and we'll see the depth of determination of our new government.

One idea I strongly applaud is the move to combine social services, health and drivers' licences into one card. Great idea, and it'll save a bundle.

Another suggestion to reduce fraud is to have a fingerprint for identification. If it's registered under health rules (i.e., not circulated to police, etc.) what's the problem? The Ontario Coalition Against Poverty (who are these guys anyway?) oppose such a move because fingerprinting is "a practice normally associated with criminal investigation."

Yeah — what's the point? Welfare and health care fraud is a criminal matter. If everyone has to do it, there's no stigma attached. We now have photo I.D. Why not fingerprints?

Bill 173 is gone and the multiple service agencies with it. "We're delighted," said Lynn Moore of the Ontario Red Cross — a sentiment I share.

The M.S.A.s would have bureaucratized 1,200 non-profit agencies into 200 government-run offices and would probably have destroyed the volunteer groups in the process. Bureaucrats tend to drive volunteers nuts.

Maybe we'll all have to change our attitudes regarding public figures. Wouldn't that be refreshing? Problem is: if public figures tell the truth, what do I write about?

HEY!

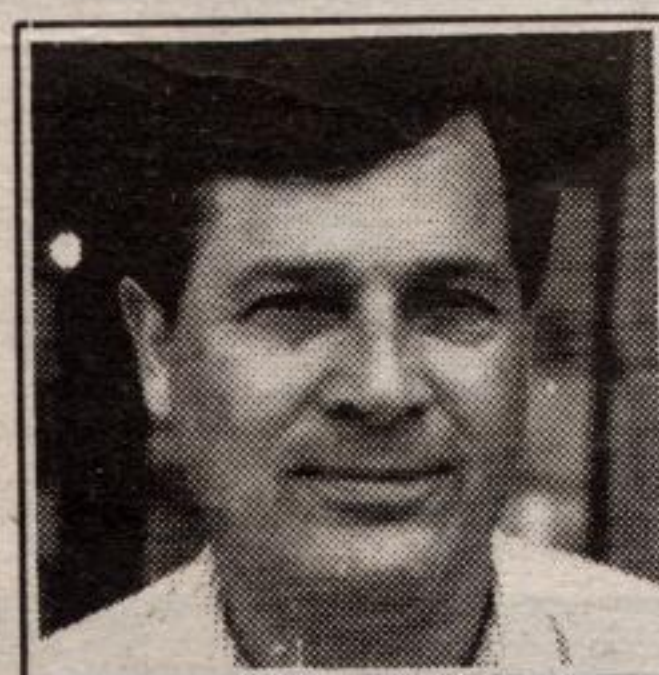
Do you agree with the new \$1 charge to enter the park wading pool?



"Not for each kid but maybe for a family, because the lake's not that great to use. It's not a lot of money, but it should be optional. If you want to see it maintained better or improvements to the park, you should pay."
Doreen Hepburn, Main Street



"It's not that much, but I guess somebody has to get paid to clean it and maintain it. I think people appreciate something more when they have to pay."
Karen Brozic, R.R. 3, Acton



"I think it should be free. We (taxpayers) can afford that for the kids. I don't think it costs that much to maintain. I think there will be more trouble collecting the money than it's worth."
Al Munkacsi, R.R. 1, Acton



"No. I understand that years ago people went around town collecting money when the pool was built, so why should we pay for it again. It's not the amount to swim, but the principle of the matter."
Christine Kri, Longfield Road

Same time last year ...

Business owner **Levi Vernon** purchased the old YMCA building on Mill Street, promising to restore it and re-open the building for community uses ... **Janis Fread** was hired by the Acton BIA as its part-time coordinator ... Acton cyclist **Tim Hadfield** was selected for Canada's Commonwealth Games team.